

- (2) To promote the use and conservation of such district or landmark for the education, pleasure and enrichment of the residents of the city or county and the State as a whole.

" § 160A-400.2. Exercise of powers by counties as well as cities.

The term 'municipality' or 'municipal' as used in G.S. 160A-400.1 through 160A-400.15 shall be deemed to include the governing board or legislative board of a county, to the end that counties may exercise the same powers as cities with respect to the establishment of historic districts and designation of landmarks.

" § 160A-400.3. Character of historic district defined.

Historic districts established pursuant to this Part shall consist of areas which are deemed to be of special significance in terms of their history, prehistory, architecture, and/or culture, and to possess integrity of design, setting, materials, feeling, and association.

" § 160A-400.4. Designation of historic districts.

Any municipal governing board may, as part of a zoning or other ordinance enacted or amended pursuant to this Article, designate and from time to time amend one or more historic districts within the area subject to the ordinance. Such ordinance may treat historic districts either as a separate use district classification or as districts which overlay other zoning districts. Where historic districts are designated as separate use districts, the zoning ordinance may include as uses by right or as conditional uses those uses found by the Preservation Commission to have existed during the period sought to be restored or preserved, or to be compatible with the restoration or preservation of the district.

No historic district or districts shall be designated until:

- (1) An investigation and report describing the significance of the buildings, structures, features, sites or surroundings included in any such proposed district, and a description of the boundaries of such district has been prepared, and
- (2) The Department of Cultural Resources, acting through the State Historic Preservation Officer or his or her designee, shall have made an analysis of and recommendations concerning such report and description of proposed boundaries. Failure of the department to submit its written analysis and recommendations to the municipal governing board within 30 calendar days after a written request for such analysis has been received by the Department of Cultural Resources shall relieve the municipality of any responsibility for awaiting such analysis, and said board may at any time thereafter take any necessary action to adopt or amend its zoning ordinance.